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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 0418
INFO ALL SOUTH AND CENTRAL ASIA COLLECTIVE
CIS COLLECTIVE
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC
RHEHAAA/NSC WASHINGTON DC
RHMFISS/HQ USCENCOM MACDILL AFB FL
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC
RUEHHE/AMEMBASSY HELSINKI
RUEHNT/AMEMBASSY TASHKENT
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 TASHKENT 000150

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE
SBU DELIBERATIVE PROCESS
DEPT FOR SCA/CEN, EXBS FOR J. HARTSHORN
AMEMBASSY ASTANA PASS TO USOFFICE ALMATY
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PASS TO AMCONSUL HYDERABAD
AMEMBASSY HELSINKI PASS TO AMCONSUL ST PETERSBURG
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PASS TO AMCONSUL VLADIVOSTOK
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PASS TO AMCONSUL YEKATERINBURG

E.O. 12958: DECL: 2019-02-09

TAGS: [ASEC](#) [KNNP](#) [PBTS](#) [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [UZ](#)

SUBJECT: UZBEKISTAN INTERESTED IN RESUMING COOPERATION ON COMMODITY
IDENTIFICATION TRAINING

REF: a) 08 TASHKENT 945

CLASSIFIED BY: Steven Prohaska, Second Secretary, P/E Office; REASON: 1.4(B), (D)

¶1. (C) Summary: The Government of Uzbekistan has demonstrated interest in resuming cooperation on International Nonproliferation Export Control Program (INECP) activities sponsored by the Export Control and Related Border Security (EXBS) Program. These activities are intended to improve the ability of Uzbekistan's front-line law enforcement officers to detect and interdict nuclear, biological, chemical, and missile-related materials. Meetings between U.S. and Uzbek officials on February 2-3 included a commodity identification training (CIT) workshop and a technical exchange to reintroduce officials at the Institute of Nuclear Physics to INECP and CIT. Uzbek officials described several instances of interdictions of radioactive materials transiting Uzbekistan's borders since 2001, and unsuccessful Iranian attempts to persuade Uzbekistan to give them such materials. Future INECP activities may include a pilot training course, curriculum development to expand this training to a large number of Uzbek officials, and the deployment of XRF metal analyzers in the country. Also interesting was the Uzbek side's proposal that Uzbekistan provide commodity identification training for neighboring countries in the future. End summary.

¶2. (C) On February 2-3, a team of representatives from the National Nuclear Security Administration of the Department of Energy and Pacific Northwest National Laboratory as well as Emboffs involved with EXBS met with representatives from the Government of Uzbekistan to discuss the resumption of cooperation in Commodity Identification Training. Officials from Uzbekistan's Institute of Nuclear Physics, State Customs Committee, and Ministry for Foreign Economic Relations took part in the meetings. Director of the Institute of Nuclear Physics Umar Salikhbaev was pleased to meet with the U.S. side, noting that Uzbekistan's leadership has approved moving forward on these activities.

¶3. (C) The Uzbek side described the history of Uzbekistan's experience with export controls, citing resolutions, decrees, and codexes the country has adopted since independence. Uzbekistan has tried to bring its regulations closer to international standards and has joined several conventions on counterproliferation. The officials noted that after the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 1540, Uzbekistan altered its legislation in accordance with the resolution.

Majority of Intercepted Radioactive Cargoes Bound for Iran

¶4. (C) Leading Researcher Vitaliy Petrenko of the Institute of Nuclear Physics described several instances of Uzbekistan interdicting radioactive materials at its borders since 2001. He blasted Iran as an "evil empire" and a "troublemaker." Uzbekistan's first detection of radioactive cargo--a truck carrying radioactive pipes containing layers of yellow powder bound for Iran--took place at Alat border crossing point in September 2001, just days after the post had been equipped with radiation portal monitors. He said that Iran had tried to convince the Uzbeks to give them these pipes, noting that the Uzbeks had to think about their families, but the officials had still refused to cooperate and had sent the shipment back to Kyrgyzstan where it came from. Additional interdictions took place at Alat and Yallama years later--Petrenko estimated that this happened roughly in 2006-2007. Petrenko noted that at Alat, Uzbekistan had seized zinc powder produced in Kazakhstan headed to Iran, and at Yallama had stopped a shipment of molybdenum oxide produced in Kazakhstan headed to Iran. Petrenko added that Uzbekistan had discovered still more radioactive material at Nazarbek in November 2007 that had been bound for Iran. More recently, Uzbekistan had seized radioactive materials that had originated in Beijing.

Existing Vulnerabilities, Future Plans

¶5. (C) Petrenko said that improving Uzbekistan's export controls is a priority for the Uzbek officials present, and that they are happy

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this activity is taking place. He spoke of several vulnerabilities that concern him; Uzbekistan's northern border is not well-protected, and it is possible that smuggled goods can penetrate Uzbekistan's territory from Kazakhstan. Of Uzbekistan's twelve international airports, only one is equipped with radiation portal monitor equipment. Petrenko warned that discerning smugglers can easily use other airports, and that this issue needs to be addressed. Uzbekistan plans to open two more checkpoints on

its borders with radiation portal monitors. Procuring additional monitors is a headache for the State Customs Committee, however, because equipping one checkpoint with cheaper Russian models would still cost approximately 400,000 USD.

Proposal for Future INECP Activity

16. (C) The INECP team laid out its proposal for further engagement between the Government of Uzbekistan and INECP. First, this would include a three-day pilot training program on dual-use materials in Uzbekistan this summer, perhaps using U.S. or already-trained Kazakh instructors. Second, there would be work on curriculum development that would adapt the CIT information for an "indigenized" course that could be used to retrain the State Customs Committee. Third, it would include the deployment of two XRF portable metal analyzers, which will improve the ability of Uzbek officers to easily determine the composition of suspect metals. The Uzbek side appeared generally enthusiastic about the proposal, suggesting that five days for the course would be more useful than three, though they were somewhat cool to the idea of being trained by Kazakhs. (Comment: The Uzbek side's reaction probably stems from Uzbekistan's longstanding rivalry with Kazakhstan. End comment.) The Uzbek side also suggested that Uzbekistan later conduct training for other countries in the region. INP also asked that it be given the XRF units, noting that it already conducts quarterly training at Customs posts and that after the training, one unit could be transferred to Customs. (Comment: The Customs officials took exception to this idea, presumably wanting to have the units for itself, but the final decision on which agency will have control over these units will probably lay with higher-ups in the GOU. End comment.) Petrenko noted that Uzbekistan has over 200 border crossing points, each one staffed with at least ten people, and advocated training the majority of these on how to detect dual-use materials.

Comment:

17. (C) The tone of the meetings and the active participation of GOU officials from several ministries suggests that Uzbekistan is interested in renewing engagement with the International Nonproliferation Export Control Program, which stalled in 2005. It is notable that Uzbekistan sent a larger number of officials to these meetings than it had in 2005. Furthermore, while the Institute of Nuclear Physics would only discuss cooperation in detecting nuclear-related materials in 2005, this time the officials showed interest in expanding the training to include chemical, biological, and missile-related materials. The INP Director's near-insistence that the pilot training course be expanded to five days instead of three days and the officials' suggestion that Uzbekistan conduct similar training in other neighboring countries also are encouraging signs. It is too early to say whether higher-level officials in the GOU will agree on all these points, however, as they do not always share the same enthusiasm of many working-level Uzbeks for engagement with the U.S. on security issues.

NORLAND

To view the entire SMART message, go to URL http://repository.state.sgov.gov/_layouts/OSS_SearchResults.aspx?k=messageid:29b42724-aaa0-4746-89